

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A process for providing a single business network including a plurality of member entities, each one of the plurality of member entities being an owner/manager of at least one independently owned commercial office building, the process comprising the 5 steps of:
 - (a) aggregating the plurality of independently owned commercial office buildings under a single brand identity;
 - (b) marketing the plurality of independently owned commercial office buildings on both a regional and a nationwide basis under the single brand identity;
- 10 (c) negotiating discounted prices for the purchase of various goods and services on behalf of the aggregated plurality of independently owned commercial office buildings and a plurality of tenants of each of the member entities;
- (d) negotiating one or more revenue sharing opportunities on behalf of the aggregated plurality of independently owned commercial office buildings from vendors seeking to advertise or display products or services on the commercial office building 15 premises, or to gain access to the commercial office building premises to install equipment that may be used in marketing and selling products or services to the tenants of each of the member entities;
- (d) implementing an online listing and reservation system to market space 20 available for lease in the aggregated plurality of independently owned commercial office buildings and to facilitate leasing transactions; and

(e) implementing an online e-marketplace transaction platform where a plurality of the member entities can solicit bids for certain goods and services from one or more vendors for use at their commercial office building premises.

2. The process of claim 1 further comprising the step of identifying a

5 potential member entity of the business network through at least one of a referral by an existing member entity, a referral from a third-party vendor and a review of a real estate database including commercial office space listings.

3. The process of claim 2 further comprising the step of meeting with a

10 potential member entity of the business network after the step of identifying the potential member entity of the business network in order to give a presentation concerning the benefits of affiliation with the business network.

4. The process of claim 3 further comprising the step of presenting a

participation agreement to the potential member entity for execution by the potential member entity if the potential member entity agrees to become a member of the business 15 network.

5. The process of claim 4 further comprising the step of completing a

detailed assessment of the member entity's commercial office buildings.

6. The process as claimed in 5 further comprising the step of assessing the

new member entity an annual membership fee based on a total square footage of a 20 commercial office building owned or operated by the new member entity, a percentage of gross revenues derived from the member entity property, or some other metric associated with the commercial office building owned/operated by the new member entity.

7. A process for enrolling a member entity in a business network including a plurality of member entities wherein each member entity owns/operates at least one commercial office building, the process comprising the steps of:

(a) identifying a potential member entity of the business network

5 through at least one of a referral by an existing member entity, a referral from a third-party vendor, a physical inspection of a particular market or submarket to identify one or more qualified commercial office buildings, and a review of a real estate database including a plurality of commercial office space listings;

(b) meeting with the potential member entity of the business network

10 after the step of identifying the potential member entity of the business network in order to give a presentation to the potential member entity concerning the benefits of affiliation with the business network; and

(c) presenting a participation agreement to the potential member entity

15 for execution by the potential member entity if the potential member entity agrees to become a member entity of the business network.

8. The process as claimed in claim 7 wherein following execution of the participation agreement by the potential member entity, the potential member entity becomes a new member entity, and wherein the process further comprises the step of assessing the new member entity an annual membership fee.

20 9. A process for implementing a purchasing program for a business network including a plurality of member entities wherein each member entity owns/operates at least one commercial office building, the process comprising the steps of:

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(a) the business network forming an alliance with each one of a plurality of vendors, including a vendor that facilitates online procurement and bid management of a variety of goods and services, each one of the plurality of vendors offering for purchase goods and/or services required for operation of a commercial office building, wherein each one of the plurality of vendors becomes a preferred vendor of the business network for the particular goods/services offered by the one of the plurality of vendors;

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(b) each member entity selecting needed goods/services available for purchase from the plurality of vendors;

(c) each one of the plurality of vendors offering the goods/services available for purchase at discounted prices to the plurality of member entities of the business network; and

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(d) each member entity negotiating and forming contracts with each one of the plurality of vendors offering the selected needed goods/services.

10. The process as claimed in claim 9 wherein the goods and/or services include janitorial goods and services, equipment maintenance services, landscaping goods and services, security services, building management services, office supplies, office furniture and travel-related services.

11. The process as claimed in claim 9 wherein each one of the plurality of vendors with whom alliances are formed is selected based upon its reputation for providing high quality goods/services.

12. The process as claimed in claim 9 wherein the step of forming an alliance with each one of a plurality of vendors includes the sub-step of inserting a termination for convenience provision in each alliance agreement with each one of the plurality of vendors permitting the business network to terminate the alliance agreement at any time and for any reason.

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13. The process as claimed in claim 12 wherein the step of each member entity negotiating and forming contracts with each one of the plurality of vendors offering the selected needed goods/services includes the sub-steps of:

10 (a) inserting a termination provision into each one of the contracts wherein the one of the contracts is automatically terminated if the alliance agreement between the one of the vendors and the business network is terminated; and
(b) inserting a termination provision into each one of the contracts wherein the one of the contracts is automatically terminated if the member entity ceases to be a member entity of the business network.

15 14. The process as claimed in claim 12 wherein the step of forming an alliance agreement with each one of a plurality of vendors includes the sub-step of including a provision in the alliance agreement wherein the one of the vendors agrees to pay the business network an annual marketing fee wherein the annual marketing fee is calculated based upon the annual gross revenues generated in all of the contracts between the one of the vendors and each member entity.

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15. The process as claimed in claim 1 wherein the online listing and reservation system is comprised of:

(a) a data source including a listing for each one of the commercial office buildings owned/managed by each one of the member entities wherein the listing includes a location for each one of the commercial office buildings, an age of each one of the commercial office buildings, one or more units of office space available for leasing in each one of the commercial office buildings, a rental price for the one or more units of office space available, a square footage amount for the one or more units of office space available, and one or more amenities associated with the one or more units of office space available;

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(b) a search/retrieval engine for querying the data source based upon one or more input parameters and for selectively retrieving at least one listing of one or more units of office space available for leasing corresponding to the input parameters;

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and

(c) a reservation engine for enabling a prospective tenant to contact a member entity to reserve one or more units of available office space under flexible lease terms including a short term duration lease or the leasing of furnished space.

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16. The process as claimed in claim 1 wherein the regional marketing step includes the sub-steps of:

(a) placing advertisements in a plurality of industry publications relating to a plurality of benefits a potential tenant may realize through leasing office space in one of the commercial office buildings of one of the member entities of the business network; and

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(b) launching an Internet web site accessible to a plurality of potential tenants having content relating to the plurality of benefits a potential tenant may realize through leasing office space in one of the commercial office buildings of one of the member entities of the business network.

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